

The French Broad Hustler

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HENDERSONVILLE, N. C.

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A WORD OF WARNING.

It has been published in a number of newspapers that the post office department recently made a ruling to the effect that persons opening mail addressed to others would be required to pay a fine of \$200. The suggestion is offered that people must see, before leaving the office, that there has been no mistake. So it will be well to examine all mail before opening it, rather than become involved with Uncle Sam.

If such a ruling as this is to be enforced another should be promulgated imposing a penalty upon postal clerks for putting mail in the wrong box, or handing it out to the wrong parties. The public is entitled to a rule "that will work both ways." But it occurs to us that the whole thing is ridiculous and unjust. Should the department insist upon its enforcement thousands of people would soon be dragged into the federal courts for having become the victims of conditions well nigh unavoidable. However, it will be best to look at all mail before opening it.

The action of the Buncombe county convention in passing a resolution providing for the adoption of the unit rule by the delegations in the congressional and judicial conventions, after the first ballot, has been severely condemned at several county conventions held during the past week. In these resolutions characterizing the Buncombe affair as unjust, unreasonable and contrary to party law and precedent have been adopted, but it makes no material difference now, since one ballot will end the contest. However, it is well to bear these things in mind for future reference.

The endorsement of ex-Sheriff J. Williams for congress by the family of republican cousins recalls the message Collector Harkins sent Mr. Williams through Mr. A. B. Freeman, soon after he (Williams) had been defeated for mayor by Frank King. Mr. Williams had previously presided over a meeting of Henderson county republicans which "resolved" against third-terms and upon hearing of his defeat for a third term as mayor Mr. Harkins sent this token of remembrance: "Tell Williams I am glad to hear that he is first to hit the ceiling." Now "Hush" has been displaced by the faction Mr. Williams seeks to represent and the question naturally arises: "will the big Asheville republican and his friends warm up to the Henderson county man should the latter be the choice of the republican convention for congress?"

If one of the "outs" is to be named as the republican candidate for congress in this district, it would appear to an individual occupying a neutral attitude in the matter, that Hon. H. S. Anderson should be entitled to some consideration, since he placed the entering wedge which has prized some of the high muck-a-mucks off the official tree. But it is known that Mr. Anderson does his own thinking and takes no orders from any body. He is not in sympathy with the court house cousin-ring crowd and a republican who does not pay tribute to that clique need not apply for recognition. The family of cousins will see that one of their pets gets there always on schedule time. "The people be damned," seems to be their attitude.

Ex-Congressman Linney predicted that the next republican state convention would be held in the Atlanta penitentiary; former Senator Anderson said a sheep-killing dog would not be guilty of the acts of some republican leaders; Judge Bynum called them political pirates; C. J. Harris, late republican candidate for governor, recently said: "Objectionable practices on the part of the 'organization' crowd, such as accepting fees for the use of their 'influence', figures in the matter, (of collector Harkins' removal). The powers that be have come to realize that the Butler factions are interested solely in the spoils of office, in lobbying and scheming," all of which must be exceedingly nauseating to men of principle and decency.

And now the public is informed that Prof. J. J. Britt is the candidate of the Butler-Rollins faction for congress. Two years ago he was Harkins' man, according to the friends of Judge Ewart. The professor was evidently born under an unlucky star.

It is said that the removal of Collector Harkins came as a thunderbolt from a clear sky to those republicans who "have been accepting fees for their political influence" as C. J. Harris puts it. Doubtless the next thing in order will be a general shaking up of dry bones in the revenue ring in Asheville. Wonder if John Grant, who has already been spat upon, is laughing in his sleeve.

It now appears that the democratic congressional convention to be held in Asheville next Saturday will be merely a ratification meeting. Mr. Crawford will have votes enough and some to spare, so that one ballot will settle the nomination. The people have spoken and their representatives have only to carry out the primary instructions. There will be no wrangling, but a harmonious gathering of the untrifled to name a standard bearer who shall successfully wave the old democratic banner over the hills, dales and majestic peaks of our grand old mountains distinct, as in former times. And this kind of meeting means a great deal.

When candidates for office are chosen by the people themselves, "there is no kick coming," but packed conventions too often disregard the will of the masses and do the bidding of political tricksters which results in discord followed by defeat. The rank and file of the democratic party in the tenth district have this year selected Hon. W. T. Crawford to be their standard-bearer in the congressional contest and every indication points to a big majority for that tried and trustworthy defender of democracy and good government. Let our people carefully observe the progress of things and perform their duties like men.

DAMES AND DAUGHTERS.

Under the newly adopted bylaws of the Red Cross society Miss Clara Barton is elected president for life and receives unusual authority.

The eighty-second birthday of Mrs. Mary A. Livermore was celebrated by the reading of a poem written for the occasion by Alice Stone Blackwell.

Miss Ellen Terry spends a great deal of leisure in collecting choice perfumes and gorgeous materials. The latter she uses in personal adornment as well as for decoration.

Miss Helen Gould's appearance in no way suggests the millionaire. She goes about her house in a gown which a country dressmaker might have made, and sometimes dons a big white apron to protect her dress.

Miss Ethel Barrymore evidently does not share the superstition that ill luck is bound to overtake those who wear opals, for she has an enormous one, pear shaped and fully three inches long, which she wears as a pendant.

Governor Crane of Massachusetts has appointed Miss Caroline Hazard, president of Wellesley college, a member of the Massachusetts state board of education to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer.

Mrs. McKinley ate her Christmas dinner with her sister, Mrs. Barber, in the old homestead in Canton, in which they dwelt when they were Ida and Mary Saxton. It was the first holiday she has spent away from home since Mr. McKinley's death.

Ex-Empress Eugenie's photographs taken within the last twenty years are very few, but in all she presents a prolific view. The reason for this? The droop in her oblique eyes has accentuated with time and grief, and the empress is still mindful of her once great beauty.

"Vanumanutangl," which is Samoan for the "home of the singing bird," is the name given to her new residence in the Santa Cruz mountains of California by Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson. The spot is in one of the quietest parts of the great blue mountains and much like the old home at Vaillima.

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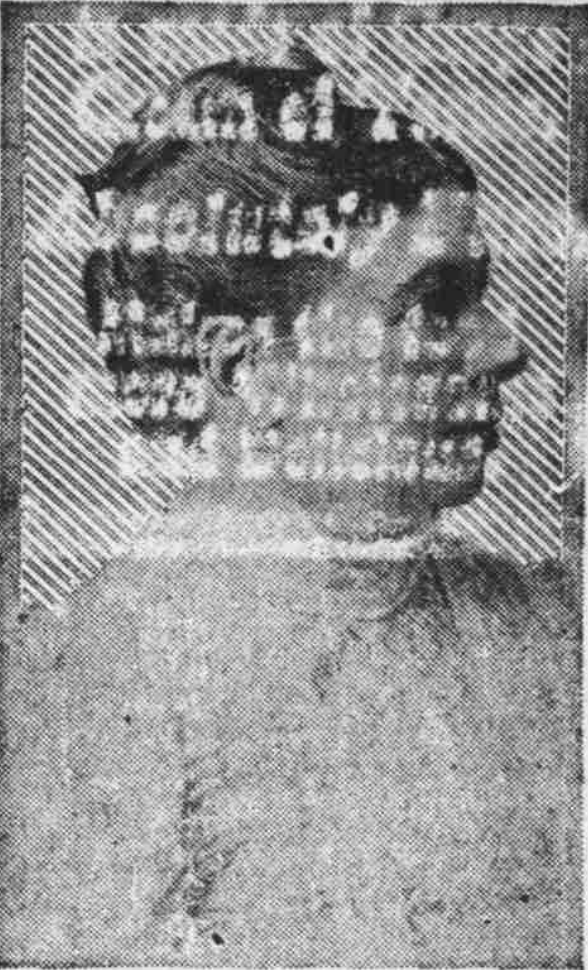
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Countess Tolstoi, wife of the Russian nobleman and novelist, through whose devotion the most distinguished of the subjects of the czar has just been nursed back to health from what was thought to be a mortal illness, is in her way almost as wonderful as her famous husband.

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COUNTESS TOLSTOI.

dividuality and her theories are as marked and distinct as are his. Nor does she always agree with him.

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GLAZENER

CULTURE OF DATES

HOW THE GREAT ALKALI PLAINS ARE BEING RECLAIMED.

What Irrigation and the Date Palm Are Doing For That Arid Land. Fruit That Rivals the Product of Arabia—Future of the Southwest.

Uncle Sam's fruit sharps in the department of agriculture predict that in a few years the United States will produce enough dates to supply the home demand. Already date cultivation has passed the experimental stage, and a crop of fine fruit has just been harvested at Phenix, Ariz. This harvest has been gathered for several years, with an increase each year.

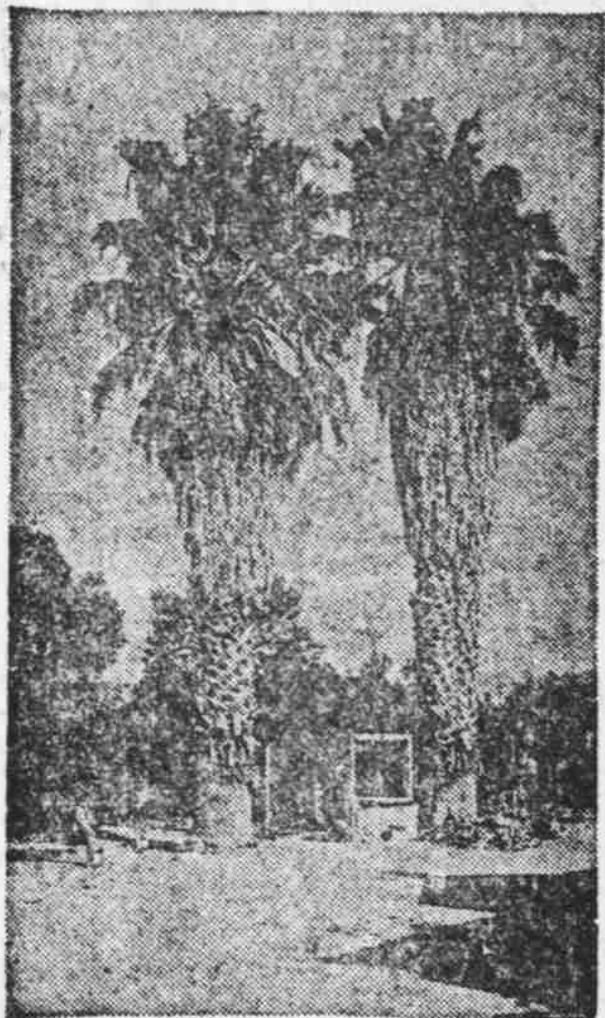
The Colorado desert, with its vast rainless regions, its intense summer heat and dry atmosphere and the readiness of irrigation in many places from the Colorado and its many Arizona tributaries, aided by the water storage to be, is destined to rank as a second Sahara in the production of dates. Neither the alkali soil nor the alkali water hinders the thrift of the date palm. It is even claimed by some good judges that the alkali promotes the growth of the tree. It does look so, for some of the most vigorous trees are seen in soil that is white with alkali. No other fruit tree could endure a single season in such soil.

The first date palms were brought to this country by the missionary fathers who accompanied the early Spanish pioneers in Mexico and California. Lower California is yet marked by aged palms of those days, but the fruit is valueless owing to the poor grade of trees.

Several more recent attempts have been made to introduce the date palm in this country, but the only success has been that of the Arizona experiment station farm. These fruited trees are of the Egyptian variety. The trees first placed at the experiment station bore fruit the fourth year, producing a large and juicy date.

It was not until the department of agriculture took up date culture with determination that any progress was made. Then it was that the University of Arizona and the experiment station farm offered to prepare a date garden for the reception of the shoots that the department of agriculture was selecting for the shipment of 1890-1900, provided the department would furnish the shoots of standard varieties from the orchards of the old world.

An agreement was made, and in 1899 a few shoots were secured from the best date orchard on the Algerian coast and sent to the university and to the experiment farm. The following year a number of shoots of the Deglet Noor



TWO ANCIENT PALMS.

(Date of Light) variety were secured south of the Atlas mountains. These, with a variety known as the Rhars, the earliest date to ripen in Biskra, were sent to the Algerian coast. Also shoots of every staple variety found in the north Algerian Sahara were added, and the whole shipment of eight tons was sent to Arizona. In less than forty days after leaving the Algerian coast the palms were in Tempe, Ariz., near Phenix, under preparation for transplanting. Two cases of the Rhars variety were sent to California, to be in the care of the University of California.

Biskra, the land of dates in the old world, and Phenix have the same mean temperature from May to October. Taking the two most favorable date regions in the United States—Phenix, Ariz., and Fresno, Cal.—and comparing these two regions with Biskra, their conditions stand in the following proportions: Fresno, 7; Phenix, 11; Biskra, 13. It is seen that Phenix is but two points off from Biskra, "the land of dates." When Phenix is used in this comparison, it means all of the Salt river valley and much of the surrounding Colorado desert, embracing nearly 8,000 square miles.

The date palm is not a desert plant. It will thrive in any country where the winters do not kill it. It can endure equally well the driest and the wettest climate, but it takes a dry and a very hot climate to make the tree produce good fruit. An old Arabian proverb says, "The date palm, the queen of trees, must have her feet in the running water and her head in the burning skies." This proverb is the key to successful date culture.

The United States imports annually \$600,000 worth of dates. But the success of the experiments in date growing demonstrates that the end of this importation is in sight. It would seem therefore that in date culture lies the future of much of the great alkali desert of the southwest.

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